

SESSION 9: Divine Chastisement (3:1-5)

SONG 3:1-5

1. *By night on my bed I sought the one I love; I sought him, but I did not find him.*
2. *"I will rise now," I said, "And go about the city; in the streets and in the squares I will seek the one I love." I sought him, but I did not find him.*
3. *The watchmen who go about the city found me; I said, "Have you seen the one I love?"*
4. *Scarcely had I passed by them, when I found the one I love. I held him and would not let him go, until I had brought him to the house of my mother, and into the chamber of her who conceived me.*
5. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or by the does of the field, do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases.*

I. OVERVIEW OF SONG 3:1-5

- A. Jesus hides His face from the young Bride. In SONG 2:8-17, the Lord challenged the Bride to come out of the comfort zone. He invited her to bridal partnership. This was an answer to her original prayer, ***"Draw me after You and let us run."*** In SONG 1:5-2:17, He has been drawing her to Himself as an extravagant worshipper. Now it is time for her to begin running with Him on the mountains. She experienced the chastisement of a loving Father who pried her fingers off the things that held her in bondage (Heb.12:5-12). His discipline was expressed by removing His manifest presence from her. His presence returned when she rose up in obedience to Him.
- B. The Father loves the young Bride too much to allow her to come up short of being the glorious mature Bride of the Lord Jesus. He is not angry, He is jealous for her. There is a vast difference. Jesus does not express any wrath but only tender discipline so that she will share His values as a mature Bride. Jesus longs for deeper partnership with us.

II. WHEN THE LORD LEAVES – UNDERSTANDING THE TENSION

For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Heb. 13:5)

- A. Firstly, we understand that the Lord will never leave us in terms of our salvation. Our salvation will never come to an end.
- B. Secondly, He will never allow a sin or a pressure so great that we can not bear it.

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1Cor.10:13)

1. He will never leave us in terms of allowing us to bear a burden beyond our strength. In what way does He leave us? Specifically, He leaves us in the sense of our ability to discern His manifest presence. He never leaves us in the full sense of our salvation.
 2. He orchestrates the easiest trial that effectively awakens our heart. We all know stories about people with seemingly unbearable pressures. I imagine the Lord saying, “I allowed the softest touch possible for the response that I desire.” Jesus never allows the hardest trial. However, the soft one is occasionally very difficult on the flesh, but it is designed to awaken the deep places in our heart. Our confession is, “His banner over me is love” (2:4). The flag that defines the Lord’s dealings in our life is love.” In other words, they produce love and are never more severe than is necessary. She eventually is assured that the hiding of His face in 3:1 was for her spiritual well being.
- C. The scripture sets forth God leaving us is in terms of our ability to discern his manifest presence. We commonly refer to this dynamic when we say “I do not feel the Lord like I used to”.
1. In other words it is not that He actually withdraws but our ability to feel His presence is affected.
 2. He strategically lifts the sense of his presence from our hearts to communicate diverse things to us.
 - a. He humbles us causing us to be aware of our need for Him
 - b. He alerts us to problems
 - c. He awakens deeper hunger in us for himself.

III. BEHOLDING THE LORD DIMLY IN THIS AGE.

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known (1 Cor. 13:12).

- A. The apostle Paul's use of the metaphor of a mirror is one that requires understanding of the ancient mirror. The ancient mirror was a piece of polished metal that gave only a dim reflection. It was not like a modern mirror that gives a clear reflection. In the age to come we see face to face. Then we will have complete knowledge and deep revelation of God. The apostle Paul taught that in this age, the age of faith, we look dimly as in a mirror. Currently, we only possess a little revelation.
 - 1. The “dim beholding” of God in this age is a foundational principle that causes some confusion to the people of God.
 - 2. It is not Biblical to teach that we can have continual “face to face” knowledge of God now. I hear some exaggerate when they speak of the presence of God as being so strong all the time.
- B. God has strategically ordained in this age that we walk by faith, not by feeling or sight. Therefore, we only see God dimly.
 - 1. Feelings come occasionally as an encouragement but they do not come often enough to live by them or to base our life on them.
 - 2. We live by confidence in God's word even when we do not feel His presence. The pleasure of experiencing God comes for brief seasons and then lifts again. Yet, those brief moments impact our emotional make-up in a significant way. God releases feelings of His presence differently in each individual life.
 - 3. Even the remembrance of our past pleasure in experiencing God keeps our heart encouraged in some seasons. I have known times when God strategically hid His face from me. I could not feel His Presence. However, the remembrance of those former moments when God revealed Himself to my spirit gave me courage and strength to press through the dry seasons. Sometimes just the fragrance of His presence (the remembrance of how sweet it was) lingers in our hearts.

4. He is obviously never gone in the real sense when He withholds the manifestation of His Presence. At such times, the devil tempts us saying, “Why don’t you try drunkenness or immorality etc.” Then we remember the sweet taste of those former moments of celebration in the banqueting house when we could feel His nearness.
5. The truth of God hiding His face is a vast subject. There are sophisticated reasons in God’s mind for doing this. Walking by faith produces humility, spiritual hunger and many dynamics that help us to overcome sin.

IV. COMMON EXAGGERATIONS RELATED TO EXPERIENCING THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

- A. Most of us have read books that relate exaggerated spiritual experiences. I believe that many biographies exaggerate on the subject of communion with God. Biographies are usually written by those who are enamored with their spiritual hero. The nature of a biography is such that they do not purposefully lie, but neither do they tell the whole truth. They usually do not tell many of the bad things.
- B. In my early days with the Lord, I believed all that the biographers wrote. I eagerly wanted to be like the person that I was reading about. These biographies were good in that they gave me a spiritual vision for more of God. However, some were harmful because they exaggerated, giving me unrealistic expectations. False expectations and exaggeration can cause pain in our spiritual life.
 1. Young believers sometimes conclude that God doesn’t love them as much as He loves others. They think of themselves as being wrong or unworthy in a distinct way. The problem of exaggeration is that it leaves people under the pain of feeling they are wrong in a way that nobody else is. Such exaggerations are not helpful.
 2. The young believer expects experiences like the person in the biography, but in truth the experience never actually occurred as it was described.
 3. The only biographies that are fully accurate are God’s biographies in the Bible. He tells about the sin, murder, adultery, anger, and the backsliding of His servants.

- C. One of the most common exaggerations concerns the subject of God's manifest presence to our hearts. Some relate how God's presence rests on them night and day without interruption. Some exaggerations teach that God's presence always rests on a fervent believer and that it grows stronger and stronger all the time. We imagine that some people experience face-to-face reality with God, with full knowledge.
1. I expected this as a new believer. But it did not happen that way in my experience. So what did I conclude? That God did not love me. Several years later, I concluded that the books that I was reading were exaggerating and that God had loved me the entire time.
 2. Exaggeration condemns those who believe it. That is why it is so important to expose them. When we exaggerate our spiritual experience beyond what is actually happening, then it condemns others. You think, "What is wrong with me God? You don't love me." No, you need to be Biblical. Paul himself said that encountering God in a face-to-face way is reserved for the age to come, not this age.

V. DIVINE DISCIPLINE IS ROOTED IN DIVINE AFFECTION

- A. In times of divine discipline, God reveals His displeasure with a particular area of our life. This is not the same thing as God's displeasure with us as a person. God can be displeased with a certain behavior in our life without despising us.
1. He disciplines us and yet has deep affection and enjoyment of us. Some people mistake Divine correction for Divine rejection. The Lord's chastisement and correction are rooted in His affection.
 2. When someone corrects us we feel rejection. The Lord is so different. His affection is strong even in seasons of discipline. Many of us do not have a model for God's affectionate correction. His relational style is difficult for some to connect with because it is so unfamiliar.

- B. As we understand our inheritance to reign as His Bride, then we understand the value and necessity of His discipline (Rev. 3:21; Rom. 8:17; Eph. 2:6-7).
1. We hear of wrestling with the Lord in resistance to obeying Him in a particular area. The difficulty with wrestling with the Lord is that He always wins. It is wiser to yield quickly because the Lord doesn't lose wrestling matches with those that He loves. He may let us wrestle with Him for weeks or even months but He always wins.
 2. Because of His fiery love, He will destroy everything in our life that opposes Him. Our God is a consuming fire (Deut.4:24; Heb.10:29). God's jealous is a good jealousy. Divine affection is like a fire that consumes everything in our life that keeps us separated from Him. His fiery affection for us will lead Him to discipline us (Heb.12:5-12).
- C. The holiness of God has several dimensions to it. God's holiness is more than His hatred of sinful things. The word "holy" is derived from a word that is often used to convey the ideas of "separation", "distinction" or "uniqueness". God's holiness speaks of something unique and totally different from everything else that we know.
1. Fundamental to the word "holy" is the concept of 'being totally other than'. God is 'totally other than' in the way He feels toward sinful people.

Let the wicked forsake his way...let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him...for He will abundantly pardon. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa. 55:7-9)
 2. When understood properly the very subject of holiness reveals God's unique passion for weak and broken people. For as high as the heavens are above the earth is how unique His feelings are for broken people. He is 'totally other than' anyone else. His passion for people is 'other than'. His mercy and love is holy or uniquely separated from all others.

VI. GOD'S MANIFEST PRESENCE IS WITHDRAWN

- A. The young Bride experiences Divine discipline.

By night on my bed I sought the One I love; I sought Him, but I did not find Him. (3:1)

1. This was a new experience for her to seek Him without finding Him. She was disobedient to God in refusing to rise up to function in the body in the way that the Lord told her (2:10-13).
2. She stays behind the wall of isolation and continues to pray on her bed, under the shade tree, eating grapes and raisin cakes instead of leaving the comfort zone (2:8,17). Jesus refuses to come to her until she obeys because He loves her too much to leave her in a position of disobedience.

- B. The nighttime of spiritual life.

“BY NIGHT” on my bed I sought the One I love... (3:1a)

1. Night is the opposite of daytime. Night seasons are in the Divine pattern
 - a. **The moral night** - this speaks of the season of moral failure and darkness. She seeks God in this night of temptation.
 - b. **The circumstantial night** - this speaks of the season of trials and difficult circumstances. King David sought the Lord in the night of the wilderness as Saul sought to kill him.
 - c. **The physical night** - this speaks of seeking God in the natural nighttime because of godly desperation to know God. A desperation strong enough to overcome the natural inclination to sleep. Hunger for His presence creates a desire in us so powerful as to cause us to seek Him even through the inconvenience of the late night hours.
 - d. **The spiritual night**-The contemplatives of the 16th century spoke of the “dark night” of the soul. This is a time of spiritual affliction or oppression, because the sense of God's Presence is withdrawn.

- C. The young Bride seeks the Lord without obedience.

By night “ON MY BED” I sought the One I love; I sought Him, but I did not find Him. (3:1)

1. It is her bed as contrasted to his bed or couch (1;4,16; 3:7). It was their couch (1:16) but now it is hers. They are not in deep partnership right now.
2. There is a breach in their relationship. He is absent. She is alone, without Him, on her own bed. Being on her bed is also in contrast to her rising up to go with Him (2:10,13).

- D. The young Bride's sincere heart of love for Jesus is affirmed.

By night on my bed I sought “THE ONE I LOVE”...(3:1)

1. She was sincere in her love toward Him just as she just proclaimed, ***“I am my Beloved’s and He is mine”*** (2:16). Her love is still set on Him, even in her spiritual difficulty. She is not a hopeless hypocrite because she is compromising in her fear. She is still a lover of God. Some people assume that they are hopeless hypocrites each time they encounter their weak flesh. She is still a lover of God. She still can say with truth ***“He is the one I love.”*** It is very important that we understand that we can still call Him ***“the one I love”*** before every area of our life is spiritually mature.
2. She fervently seeks Him. There is no desire so powerful as the longing of a sincere soul for more of Christ Jesus. This desire will lead us to holy urgency after we have tasted the sweetness of His presence in times past.
3. People that understand the message of God’s affection for them in their weakness are drawn into deep pursuit of God. This understanding doesn’t give us the liberty to live in more sin. When this powerful truth is understood, it will drive us to Him not from Him. The true message of the love of God will never lead us away from Him.

- E. The young Bride earnestly seeks the Lord.

By night on my bed “I SOUGHT THE ONE” I love; “I SOUGHT HIM”, but I did not find Him. (3:1)

1. She is using all the proven spiritual principles from her past in order to find Him, but they do not work. He wants her to find Him in rising up in the night, in the dark season. It is easy for us to give up in the dark times. He wants us to rise up, not give up. All of us experience the night seasons. Every single apostle did. That is a part of the Divine pattern; so do not lose heart when you find yourself in the night season.
2. She continues in her posture of seeking God through the familiar spiritual disciplines like prayer, meditation on the Word, in the way described in 2:3-6 when she prays, ***“Sustain me, refresh me”*** since I’m sitting at Your table experiencing Your embraces.”
3. Seek Him, but don't just seek Him like you did in the other season. She continually seeks God even in her night season, when she could not “feel” His Presence. The prophet Isaiah lamented, ***“Is there anyone who calls upon God’s name, who stirs himself up to take hold of God?”(Is. 64:7).*** He was teaching that there is a time to stir ourselves up to take hold of God because God does hide His face until we seek Him. When God hides His face, we are still to seek Him in earnest. This is not the same thing as religious hype and legalism. There is a time in this age of faith, where we feel nothing, to say, “I continually sought Him.” Even though in the next breath we say, “But I could not yet find Him.”

- F. Jesus withholds His presence from her.

By night on my bed...I sought Him, but “I DID NOT FIND HIM”. (3:1)

1. Jesus chastises her by withdrawing His presence. He holds out until we come to Him in obedience. He wants her to discover that the only safe place in the entire world is in rising up in partnership with Him.
 - a. Spiritual disciplines are no substitute for obedience. Her spiritual disciplines did not solve her problem. Prayer is never a substitute for obedience. It is not an issue of coming to Jesus to feed our spirit. Jesus likes the prayer, ‘catch the foxes,’ when you are stumbling and failing.

- b. The familiar spiritual disciplines in which we found God in one season do not automatically work in the next season if God is requiring a specific response of obedience. By now she is making the connection between her 2:17 compromise, and her inability to enjoy His Presence. The Lord is getting her attention.
 - 2. When we struggle to experience the Lord's presence using the disciplines of former days, then we should consider if the Lord wants a specific response from us.
- G. The benefits of seasons of Divine withholding
 - 1. Sometimes He withholds His presence to drive us into an extravagant seeking of His face. The lack of God's presence in our life is not always a statement of His disapproval or displeasure. The seasons of withholding have profitable results in our resolution to know the Lord intimately.
 - 2. We are led to a deeper searching of our hearts for hidden faults. Such honest searching of our own hearts helps us to find unperceived issues that might hinder the Presence of God in our lives.
 - 3. Sometimes He speaks through a different language – that being the “language of silence”. This is a very powerful communication to us.
 - 4. The withholding of His Presence forces us to walk by faith, instead of by feeling. This strengthens our ability to see the unseen. These seasons test the consistency of our love and the maturity of our faith.
 - 5. He hides Himself from us because He knows He can produce greater earnestness in our hearts by hiding His face. Only the Lord knows the perfect combination for our spiritual best. Jesus combines the intensity of blessing and withholding of blessing to create the right response in our heart. These seasons produce greater humility, by making us see our own weakness and dependence upon God. If we had unbroken feelings of God's presence while yet in a body of sin, we might stumble in spiritual pride and self-righteousness.
 - 6. We are dependent upon the Holy Spirit as the source of godly emotion and passion. In Ps. 18:1, David in his weakness said, “I love you, Oh, Lord, my strength.” David saw the Lord as the source and strength of his lively emotion and affectionate love back to God. The grace of God quickens and energizes our hearts for Christ.

7. SUMMARY - Our soul becomes so desperate in our quest for more of God because of the seasons of the withholding of His Presence, as in seasons of testing and affliction. People who have never experienced the sweetness of 2:3-4 do not have the same longing when He withholds His Presence. He allows seasons of sweetness that make us ravenous with hunger for Him in times of withholding.

VII. THE YOUNG BRIDE ADDS OBEDIENCE TO HER PRAYERS

“I will rise now, I said, and go about the city; in the streets and in the squares, I will seek the One I love. I sought Him, but I did not find Him”. (3:2)

- A. She will rise up to go as she obeys the command given in 2:10,13.

“I WILL RISE NOW”, I said, “AND GO” about the city (3:2)

1. He said, ***“Arise My Beloved and come with Me”***(2:10, 13). She now “arises” to obey the command. The disappointment of losing His presence motivates her to rise off of her bed and leave the comfort zone. Our fears will then be conquered as we take the first steps to obey. It is our inheritance to be free from each fear that binds us. The Lord is zealous for our full agreement in partnership, He desires for us to overcome fear that restrains us. The Father has given Jesus the mandate to disciple the nations. We must arise to join Him.
 2. She adds obedience to her spiritual disciplines. She saw that prayer alone would not solve her problem in this situation. It required active obedience. He held steady until she arose to go obey Him.
 3. We do not know how much time between verses 1 and 2. It could be a day, week, month, or years but our progress awaits our response of obedience. It is necessary in the Divine pattern for growing in holy passion.
- B. The young Bride enters into the corporate life of the body of Christ.

I will rise now...and go “ABOUT THE CITY”; in the streets and in the squares, I will seek the One I love. (3:2)

1. The city speaks of the corporate church which is called the city of God

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem...to the...church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven (Heb. 12:22-23)

For he waited for the city, which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Heb. 11:10)

2. The city of God speaks of the purpose of God (Heb. 11:10). Going to the city speaks of involvement with others because the city is where corporate life and activity occur in the greatest measures.
3. The greatest activity of people is in the city. In eternity the church is pictured as a magnificent city filled with beauty. It is the opposite of isolation on her bed. The city has government (elders) and divine order, which speak of the church.

- C. The place of risk outside the comfortable wall and bed.

I will rise...go about the city, "IN THE STREETS AND IN THE SQUARES"; I will seek the One I love. (3:2)

1. Jesus calls her out of her chamber to go into the streets. Streets and squares speak of where the people work, talk and interact in public places. This is where all the people inter-relate.
2. She feels vulnerable and senses less protection in these streets. She so desires Jesus, and He is in the streets. This is one place where we encounter Jesus. Therefore, she goes to where He is. She encounters many things that result in spiritual warfare, conflict, and danger. She is in the street in the city. There are risks and all kinds of activity. Harm could come to her in the city.

- D. She perseveres in seeking Jesus in the night season

In the streets and in the squares, “I WILL SEEK THE ONE” I love. I “SOUGHT HIM”, but I did not find Him. (3:2)

1. She continues to seek Jesus regardless of the immediate results. This is the kind of tenacity that God rewards. She seeks Him after obedience. The despair of the maiden wandering through the desolate streets at night is pictured here.
2. She is seeking to obey the 3-fold mandate that Jesus gave her in 1:8 when He answered her question as to where He fed His flock. He gave her a 3 fold answer in Ch. 1:8:
 - a. “I want you in the footsteps of the flock, in the life of the body, not in isolation.”
 - b. “I want you taking care of the little flock that I give you.”
 - c. “I want you by the shepherds tent.”

- E. She does not immediately find Jesus.

...in the streets and in the squares, I will seek the One I love.” I sought Him, but I DID NOT FIND HIM. (3:2)

1. Jesus required her to rise up to “follow in the footsteps of the flock” and to take care of the little goats (the little responsibilities). (1:8). However, He added that He wanted her to do this in right relationship to spiritual authority (1:8d). He wants you to rise up and go to the city as we live near the shepherd’s tents.

She says, “I arose. I sought Him, but I did not find Him.” He says, “I want you to do it in all the 3 ways described in 1:8. She rose up but she was not by the shepherd’s tent yet. She was not yet in proper relationship to Divine authority. She will have to say, “Yes!” to each of the 3 things that she resists due to past negative experiences back in 1:5-8.

- F. The young Bride is motivated by love

...in the streets and in the squares, I will seek “THE ONE I LOVE.” I sought Him, but I did not find Him. (3:2)

1. She genuinely loves Jesus. She carries her reward in her heart. Her reward is the gift to feel love from God and then to feel love back to Him. The pleasure of our labor is in the gift of feeling God’s love. That is the greatest pleasure in this life.
2. There are other legitimate pleasures, but this is the reward of painful labor. She needs Him much more when she is in the streets.

- G. The young Bride seeks Jesus near the shepherd’s tent.

I sought Him, but I did not find Him. The “WATCHMEN” who go about the city found me to whom I said, “Have you seen the One I love?” (3:2c-3)

1. The watchmen speak of the elders of the church or spiritual authority or spiritual leaders (Ezek. 3:17; Is. 62:6). The watchmen were responsible to oversee the affairs of the city, and to “watch” the city, so it is not attacked by their enemies. The watchmen in the city can be prophets or intercessors, but in this context the watchmen were the spiritual leaders of the city, the elders of the city. These are the shepherds of 1:8d. God entrusts the safety of the city (church) to them. They also “watch over” the souls of the believers (Heb. 13:17). She is finally obeying the exhortation in 1:8 to properly relate to the leaders in the body, instead of retreating in isolation. She is recognizing spiritual authority in the Body.
2. ***“The watchmen ... found me”***. As they were diligently doing their job they noticed she was troubled.

- G. The young Bride requests help from the shepherds.

I sought Him, but I did not find Him. The watchmen who go about the city found me TO WHOM I SAID, "HAVE YOU SEEN THE ONE I LOVE?" (3:2c-3)

1. She humbles herself to them and asks their help. Her humility in recognizing her need of help from others, is a new discipline that is quickly rewarded with the return of His presence in 3:4.
2. Fellowship with godly people, who are experienced in the grace of God, is valuable to all. Believers who are newly fervent need the help of more experienced watchmen who have victoriously fought the enemies that will also try to destroy them. She will need their help as she will encounter such common enemies of isolation, legalism, over-reaction, lack of balance, loss of perspective, impatience, bitterness, defensiveness, unperceived pride, etc.

- H. She wants leaders who have deep reality with Jesus

I sought Him, but I did not find Him. The watchmen who go about the city found me to whom I said, "HAVE YOU SEEN" the One I love? (3:2c-3)

1. A voice or an echo? God is searching for shepherds that would SEE Him and have a voice to speak to those who are searching for Him.

"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. (Job 42:5)

2. She wants to be fed on the deep things of Jesus.

- I. Her consistent emphasis on loving Jesus.

I sought Him, but I did not find Him. The watchmen who go about the city found me to whom I said, "Have you seen "THE ONE I LOVE?" (3:2c-3)

1. In affliction of the night she stills loves Jesus.
2. In her compromise, she still sees herself in the spiritual identity of a lover of God instead of a hopeless hypocrite.

VIII. JESUS' PRESENCE RETURNS IN RESPONSE TO HER OBEDIENCE

Scarcely had I passed by them, When I found the One I love. I held Him and would not let Him go, Until I had brought Him to the house of my Mother. And into the chamber of Her who conceived me. (3:4)

- A. She finds Jesus in God's timing as she sought Him in the night and rose up to seek Him in the city.

Scarcely had I passed by them, When I “FOUND THE ONE” I love. I held Him and would not let Him go... (3:4)

1. The Lord suddenly renews His Presence in response to her obedience.
2. In Gen. 32:26, Jacob was in trouble in a night season in his life. Jacob is pictured as wrestling with God. Jacob was also alone in the night facing his fears as he anticipated the dangers of his enemy brother Esau. He wrestled and prevailed with God. Jacob refused to give up until he touched God.
 - a. Jacob a picture of prevailing wrestling prayer that holds on to the Lord until he received the greater blessing from Him. In Hosea 12, the prophet Hosea describes Jacob's experience and adds that Jacob sought the Lord earnestly with tears and supplication.
 - b. Jacob conquered the heart of Jesus through his earnest prayer that included weeping and supplication. Jesus cannot be wrestled with in a fleshly or carnal way. The power of a man is no match for the omnipotence of God. The angel of the Lord could never have been conquered by Jacob's strength. It wasn't a carnal wrestling match that spoke of natural strength.
 - c. As a child can hold the affection of his father and his mother with earnest supplication, so in the same way the young Bride prevails over Jesus' heart because of the nature of His heart for us.

3. Michael Sullivant's dream: He was wrestling with one of his sons. In the dream, Michael allowed his son to get on top of him and to pin his arms down. His son was smiling saying, "I prevailed with my dad, I beat him." Michael felt such pleasure in wrestling with his son.
 - a. The Lord spoke to Michael in the dream and said, "I allow Myself to be pinned by you, because it brings Me such pleasure. It brings me pleasure to allow you to wrestle with Me in order to take your stand on what I have promised you."
 - b. It especially delights God's heart when we wrestle Him in the arena of asking Him to enlarge our hearts in love for Jesus. We can be sure that He will let us pin Him, in due time, in our wrestling to walk in the First Commandment. But there must be a wrestling in prayer.
 - c. The Lord is bound by His own passionate affection to respond with such earnestness to His Bride. He will not refuse such focused longing from His Bride. This is because of the emotional makeup of Jesus and His passion for us. He wants us to prevail with Him. He loves it!
 - d. His heart is stirred deeply within Him. He uses different metaphors: of a father tenderly for his children, a mother who cannot forget her nursing children, and of a bridegroom that is rejoicing over his bride. He uses many metaphors to speak of His tender emotion towards weak people.
4. The Divine principle of spiritual hunger cries out that, "if we can live without something in God, then often we will go without it." However, if there is something in the Word of God that we can't live without, then we will receive it in due time. The Lord declares, "If you want something in God's will so much that you can't live without it, then you'll have it in due time."
 - a. For example, it is the privilege of every believer to have a heart tenderized by the Word of God. Put your heart in the way of the Lord by prayer and fasting.
 - b. "Lord, we want Your presence in our life. We want our hearts tenderized. We want the Word of God alive in us. We want a spirit of prayer. We are not going to let go of You until we experience these aspects of Your presence."

- c. We do not have to live bored in God. The most fascinating reality is in the tenderness we find in the knowledge of God. Jesus will take boredom out of our lives. All will not change in one month, but great spiritual change will occur in due time. We were designed in a way that spiritual boredom is overcome by intimacy with God as the Word tenderizes our spirit.

- B. She embraces Jesus in a new way

When I found the One I love. “I HELD HIM” and would not let Him go (3:4)

1. She discovers a new holy embrace that results from her painful season of spiritual struggle.
2. This tender place in God is part of the Divine romance that was God’s main purpose in withholding His presence. Jesus knew this struggle would ignite a deep fire in her heart.

- C. She holds on to Him with newfound zeal and conviction.

When I found the One I love. I held Him and “WOULD NOT LET HIM GO” (3:4)

1. She fulfills this commitment to “never let go of Him” throughout the rest of the SONG.
2. A new holy resolution results from her painful season of spiritual darkness. This holy resolution was God’s purpose in withholding His presence.
3. She discovered in 3:1 that she could lose His presence. She has a new carefulness in her walk (Ezek. 36:26), as an expression of her gratitude and desperation. She is deeply resolved to never consciously compromise her walk again with the “little” foxes (2:15) that destroy her life in the deep things of God.
4. Times of spiritual turmoil sometimes birth “holy violence” in us to hold on to Jesus until we go deep with God (Mt. 11:12). This speaks of a violent holding on to Jesus in a life of prayer until we have the deeper things of His heart. This creates spiritually violent people, in whom the Spirit of God has worked an unquenchable resolution to do the will of God. This births a holy resolve in your heart to obtain all that God will give. This “holy violence” creates a resolution to give everything, an unquenchable obedience, an unquenchable abandonment.

- D. She immediately finds Jesus after she relates to the shepherds.

“SCARCELY HAD I PASSED BY THEM”, When I found the One I love. I held (3:4)

1. She finds Jesus immediately in the Church with the Watchmen.
2. She finds Jesus immediately after her encounter with the city of God (church) and the watchmen (spiritual authority). Christ is not far off to those who persevere in earnest humility.

- E. Her love for Jesus

Scarcely had I passed by them, When I found THE ONE I LOVE. I held Him and would not let Him go...(3:4)

1. The blessing of God returns quickly to her because of her new depth of obedience and humility. This is the result of her obeying the call to arise and to humble herself to the watchmen. She immediately finds her beloved (3:4).
2. The Lord is serious about spiritual authority, team ministry, and the local church. These are the patterns of His purpose. Divine order is very important to God. There are many problems that arise unnecessarily because we neglect the spiritual order of His kingdom. He is restoring the team ministry. He is restoring men and women in places of true spiritual authority.

- F. Her obedience extends to the most difficult places.

I held Him and would not let Him go, until I had brought “HIM TO THE HOUSE OF MY MOTHER” and into the chamber of Her who conceived me. (3:4d,e)

1. The mother is a picture of the church, the corporate church of professing believers. Jesus is the husband and father of His house.
2. Those who do God's will are His mother and brother (Mt. 12:46-50). In Rev. 12:5, the people of God are represented as a mother that births the man-child.
3. Often the most difficult place to bring Jesus is among familiar family relationships. A prophet has no honor in his own home. Bringing Jesus to her home is a significant manifestation of obedience to His command to arise and come, so as to “feed her little goats.”
4. Jackie Pullinger says, “don't wait to get on a plane before you do ministry. Minister right now to the ones and twos in your house and neighborhood. Do not to start big. Rather, start with little steps of obedience and then go from there.”

- G. She ministers Jesus in the most intimate aspects of life.

I held Him and would not let Him go, until I had brought Him to the house of my Mother. AND INTO THE CHAMBER OF HER WHO CONCEIVED ME. (3:4d,e)

1. In 1:4, Jesus brought her into His chambers in order to share intimate things with her. However, now she is bringing Jesus into her Mother's chambers. The chambers speak of the intimate places of life.
2. She effectively serves those with which she is so familiar. They respect her by giving her access to the chambers of their heart because they trust her heart and wisdom in God.

- H. She is an anointed ambassador of Jesus

I held Him and would not let Him go, until I HAD BROUGHT HIM to the house of my Mother... and into the chamber of Her who conceived me. (3:4d,e)

1. She actually brings Jesus places that He would not go without her obedience.
2. At the end of the SONG she brings Jesus to all people.

I would lead You and bring you into the house of my mother, she who used to instruct me. I would cause You to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate (SONG 8:2)

IX. JESUS “GUARDS HER” IN THIS SEASON OF HER EXPERIENCE

I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or by the does of the field, do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases (3:5).

- A. The Holy Spirit's charge is to not pressure the Bride to move on until she is prepared.

I charge you... “DO NOT STIR UP NOR AWAKEN LOVE”...(3:5e).

1. The Lord has every one of us on a course that is tailor made just for who we are, and where we are going. Jesus is telling other believers to not disrupt her. He does not want her disrupted from this particular season by unsanctified mercy and false comfort that undermines the Lord's discipline. Jesus protects her from disturbance in this unique season in her life like in 2:7.
2. Spiritually dull people, sometimes foolishly counsel the fervent, yet immature, into legalism or compromise in the name of grace. Jesus wants no premature stirring in the “name of love” that distracts her from His work of discipline.
3. Do not disturb her out of the will of God. We must recognize the underlying principle that there are various seasons in God’s dealings with us.

- B. The call to recognize the grace of God in the young Bride life

I charge you...do not stir up nor awaken love “UNTIL IT PLEASES” (3:5).

1. The Hebrew can be translated as it, he or she. The NAS translates the phrase as “until she pleases”, instead of “until it pleases”. I believe the NAS says it best. I believe the Holy Spirit is talking to the daughters of Jerusalem about not disturbing the maiden.
2. If the Hebrew word was translated He then it would refer to the Lord being awakened or stirred to action by the daughters of Jerusalem. The Lord has no need to be awakened by the daughters of Jerusalem. The Lord has no need to be protected from religious treatment by the gentleness as pictured by the gazelles or does of the field.
3. He is telling the daughters of Jerusalem in the church, “Don’t get in my way right now. I’m dealing with the Bride in a very specific way. Don’t get in between Me and her.” She is so content right now. The Holy Spirit is about to disturb her in a very surprising way.
4. Three times the Holy Spirit speaks this phrase, “Don’t arouse or awaken my love until it pleases.” (2:7; 3:5; 8:4)

- C. The Holy Spirit appeals to the need for gentleness and discernment.

I charge you...“BY THE GAZELLES OR BY THE DOES OF THE FIELD”, do not stir up nor awaken love...(3:5c,d)

1. This expression denotes how carefully and gracefully Jesus wants them to relate to His young Bride. A gazelle or doe is easily stirred and startled. When the Lord afflicts His people, we easily get off course, and get into false comfort. And the Lord says, “By the gazelles and the does,” He is appealing to these animals that are so easily taken off course. He says, “You need to be gentle when I have them in a very special season.”
2. This speaks of the importance of gentleness and extra sensitivity in relating to people in the different seasons of God’s dealings. This is in contrast to religious opinions that will be detrimental to the maiden’s spiritual growth.

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- D. The Holy Spirit speaks to the Body of Christ concerning the young Bride

“I charge you, O DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM (3:5b)

1. These represent immature believers who lack discernment in the Spirit. These believers do not understand the various operations of the Spirit, nor the different seasons in God. It is as if the Lord is saying, “I have her right where I want her. Now, leave her alone.”
2. This is the same protection that Jesus gave the young Bride in 2:7. There are seasons in God that God has us in. The charge is given specifically to the spiritually dull members of the church who do not possess the fervency of the Bride. The daughters of Jerusalem were not experienced in holy passion, and thus were not equipped to help the young Bride in a skillful way.

- E. The solemn charge of God to cooperate with the Divine season.

I CHARGE YOU, O daughters of Jerusalem (3:5).

1. He is solemnly telling other believers not to disrupt her right now. God has her in a strategic season.
2. The Lord does not want her being comforted by religious opinions.